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ABSTRACT

This booklet is part of a series designed to give educators useful information as they build a sense of community. The text focuses on violence in schools and what stakeholders can do to address this complex problem. It establishes the context for assessing violence and the potential danger to students and educators. It describes violence as learned behavior that can be unlearned and emphasizes the importance of early interventions that teach positive life skills. It offers a profile of violent versus nonviolent children and argues for the importance of positive role models, self-esteem, a sense of hope, and other conditions that can help students address problems in a nonviolent manner. Unfortunately, many children are subject to poverty, domestic violence, and other factors that increase their chances for using force to resolve difficulties. Some of the warning signs for future violent behavior include aggressive outbursts for no reason, an inability to follow directions, poor grades, insensitivity toward others' feelings, alcohol consumption, and poor school performance. To help potentially violent students, schools can use existing programs to identify existing problems. A heightened sense of community, discipline, effective classroom management, conflict-resolution skills, mentoring programs, weapons education, and parent participation can help violence prevention. (Contains 31 references.) (RJM)

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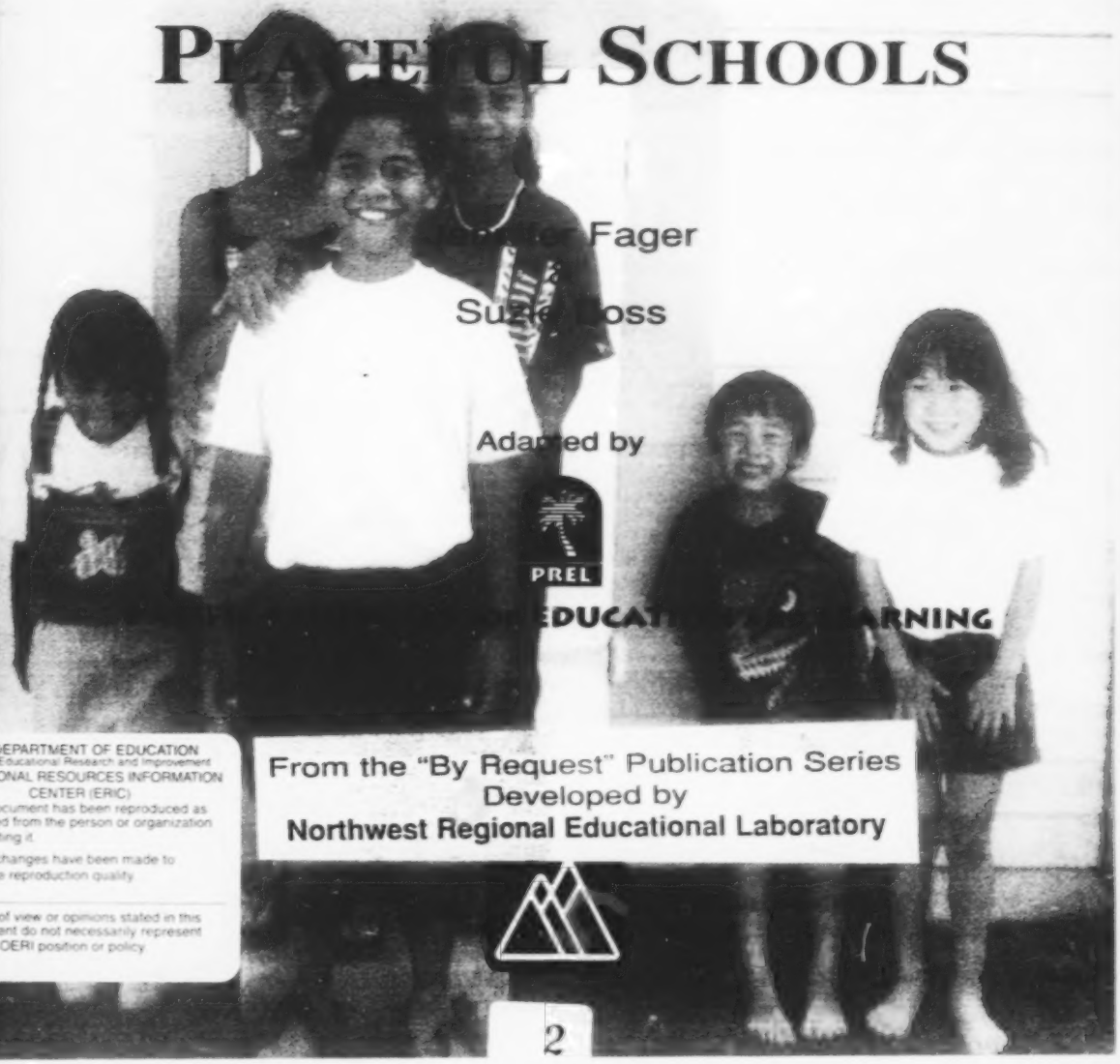
Focused Discussion...

PEACEFUL SCHOOLS



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PEACEFUL SCHOOLS

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PACIFIC RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND LEARNING

From the "By Request" Publication Series
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Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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Foreword

Focused Discussion, published by Pacific Resources for Education and Learning, is based on the *By Request* series of "hot topic" booklets that have been produced by Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. These booklets briefly address current educational concerns and issues as indicated by requests for information from the Northwest United States and beyond.

One objective of the series is to foster a sense of community and connection among educators. Another is to increase awareness of current education-related themes and concerns. The goal of the series is to give educators current, reliable, and useful information on topics that are important to them.

Introduction

Padukah, Kentucky... Jonesboro, Arkansas... Springfield, Oregon...
As the horror of school violence has hit each of these quiet communities, concern has echoed far and wide. Violence no longer feels like something that happens "somewhere else." While media reports have tallied the loss of lives and bemoaned the loss of innocence, educators have been asking hard questions:

- "How could this happen?"
- "How safe are our schools?"
- "What can we do to prevent school violence?"

There are no simple or easy answers. Violence is a complex problem that extends well beyond the schoolhouse walls. It includes a wide range of behaviors, most of them far less sensational than the rare incidents that earn headlines. Violence of all types has become so commonplace in America that it no longer surprises us. Indeed, we have grown to expect it (Centers for Disease Control, 1993). Some authors on the subject warn that acts of violence in public schools have reached the level of "forseeability," and that schools must plan for this harsh reality (Bachus, 1994).

Educators have good reasons to concern themselves with violence. The fear of violence gets in the way of the business of learning. Violence at school–or even the perception of danger–can erode community support for public education (Noguera, 1996). Efforts to react to school violence may take resources away from other worthy school programs. Schools operating with a climate of fear may find it difficult to attract and retain good teachers (Rossman & Morley, 1996).

On a more encouraging note, there are many positive reasons for educators to become involved in violence prevention. Safer schools tend to be more effective schools, experiencing higher academic achievement and fewer disciplinary problems (Drug Strategies, 1998; Heaviside et al., 1998). Well-designed violence-prevention programs can enhance students' problem-solving skills, increase their self-esteem, and help them bond with the institution of school (Kenney & Watson, 1996).

This booklet presents information intended to cut through the hype and hysteria that often surrounds the subject of school violence. It offers an overview of current research on school violence prevention and outlines some practical ideas for use in the classroom.

In Context: How Real is the Danger?

What do we mean by violence? Although government statistics on violence typically track person-to-person crimes such as assault, rape, and robbery, many researchers define school violence more broadly to include intimidation and coercion, as well as physical harm (Drug Strategies, 1998). School violence thus encompasses everything from playground bullying and taunting, to sexual harassment, to the use of weapons. Throughout society, violence of varying degrees is used to resolve conflicts, to express anger, or to gain status (Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1994).

Keeping this broader definition in mind may be helpful in talking with students about violence and planning for violence prevention. "Non-physical types of violence cannot be overlooked or we perpetuate an attitude that says it is okay to mistreat and violate others as long as there are no bruises, blood or physical injury," note the authors of a statewide violence prevention plan adopted in Minnesota (Anderson et al., 1995).

Schools are actually among the safest places young people congregate (Drug Strategies, 1998). Most students feel safe at school most of the time (Furlong & Morrison, 1994). Only two percent of the nation's public schools have seen fit to adopt stringent security measures, such as posting a full-time guard or using metal detectors (Heaviside et al., 1998). And actually, the number of children killed by gun violence in schools is about half the number of Americans killed annually by lightning strikes (Donohue, Schiraldi, & Ziedenberg 1998). Nonetheless, schools are far from being the safe havens that parents, students, teachers, and policymakers desire.

In 1994 the need for violence prevention work was officially recognized as a national issue in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Goal 7 states, "By the year 2000, every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning." Though some progress has been observed in meeting this goal, it is difficult to gauge exactly what has been accomplished. Consider these snapshots:

- Three million crimes per year are committed in and around schools, compared to one million in American workplaces (Sautter, 1995).
- In a 1995 survey, 10 percent of high school students reported carrying a weapon on school property in the past month, and 8 percent of high school students had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property (Sickmund et al., 1997).
- More than half of the nation's schools experienced some crime during the 1996-97 school year, and one in 10 reported a serious violent crime such as rape, robbery, or fights involving a weapon. In 1996, there were 10,000 reported physical attacks or fights with weapons in schools, 7,000 reported robberies, and 4,000 reported rapes and sexual assaults (Heaviside et al., 1998).
- From 1989 to 1995, the percentage of students victimized by violent crime increased from 3.4 percent to 4.2 percent (Chandler et al., 1998).
- Violence (not confined to school violence alone) is the second leading cause of death for America's students (Prothrow-Stith, 1994).

Concern about school violence is widespread, although perceptions of the problem vary among different populations. In a 1996 study, 72 percent of the general public considered the presence of drugs and violence in schools to be the most serious problem affecting education. Among teachers, however, only 47 percent viewed drugs and violence as their top concern. Teachers cited school funding, class size, and low academic standards as more significant issues than school violence (Farkas, Johnson, Friedman, & Bers, 1996; Rossman & Morley, 1996).

Perceptions of violence are significant because feeling unsafe is not conducive to learning or to teaching. Out of fear, some students avoid specific places at school, such as restrooms or certain hallways. (Bastion & Taylor, 1991). A small percentage of high school students (4.4 percent) have missed at least a day of class because they felt unsafe (Centers for Disease Control, 1995). Worrying about becoming a victim causes some students to carry a weapon or to become victimizers themselves (Kimweli & Anderman, 1997).

In schools with a high incidence of violence, teachers may hesitate to confront misbehaving students out of concern for their own safety (Kenney & Watson, 1996). Students who know their teachers fear them are less likely to show respect and more likely to be insolent and insubordinate, making good teaching almost impossible (Noguera, 1996). Clearly, there is much work to be done.

Understanding Violence

From the mountain of literature on the causes and consequences of violence among young people, two themes emerge that should be of special interest to educators:

1. Violence is learned behavior, and can be unlearned
2. Early intervention that teaches positive life skills may be the best hope of preventing violent behavior

How do children learn violence? They hear it in name-calling and threats. They experience it when family members use physical force as discipline or to vent anger. They see it on television and movie screens when guns are used to settle differences. No one who lives in American society–the most violent country in the industrialized world (Prothrow-Stith, 1994; Walker, 1995)–should be surprised that children learn violence early in life from what they see being modeled all around them (Kimweli & Anderman, 1997). Schools, after all, are reflections of their communities (Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, 1990).

School conditions can contribute to a climate in which violence becomes more likely as well. Schools that are conducive to disorder, violence, and crime also tend to have overcrowding, high student-to-teacher ratios, insufficient curricular/course relevance, low student academic achievement, student apathy, poor facility design that increases isolation and hampers communication, and adult leaders who fail to act (Rossman & Morley, 1996; Sautter, 1995; University of the State of New York, 1994; Watson, 1995).

Safe schools, in contrast, tend to be small and attempt to treat students as individuals. They seek to bridge the gap between school and community by involving parents and local residents in mutually supportive relationships. They create a physical environment that is aesthetically pleasing. They focus less energy on enforcing rules and more on developing trusting relationships between adults and students (Noguera, 1996).

Violent Versus Nonviolent Kids

What keeps some children from becoming violent, even if they have been exposed to risk factors? Researchers have identified strong protective factors that help resilient children avoid behaving violently. Protective factors are assets that promote a child's positive development. They can be internal, such as a belief in oneself, or external, such as support from family or community (Anderson, 1995). Many protective factors can be fostered in the school setting. These include:

- Positive role models; exposure to a greater number of positive rather than negative behaviors
- Development of self-esteem and self-efficacy

- Supportive relationships, including those with teachers and friends
- A sense of hope about the future
- Belief in oneself
- Strong social skills
- Good peer relationships
- A close, trusting bond with a nurturing adult outside the family
- Empathy and support from the mother or mother figure
- The ability to find refuge and a sense of self-esteem in hobbies and creative pursuits, useful work, and assigned chores
- The sense that one is in control of one's life and can cope with whatever happens

(American Psychological Association, 1996)

A strong bond to the institution of school is another powerful protective factor for young people. However, for this bond to form, schools need to provide reasons and opportunities for students to bond, and also teach skills that students can use to make positive contributions to the institution (Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1994).

Opposite from protective factors are those experiences that cause children to have greater tendencies toward violence. No one cause, social ill, or life experience inevitably leads to violence. However, specific factors put children more at risk of resorting to aggression or violence when they feel afraid, threatened, or angry (American Psychological Association, 1996; Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1994; Prothrow-Stith, 1994; Walker, 1995). These risk factors originate outside the school walls, but can exert a powerful influence on the learning environment. They include:

- Poverty, which affects one in every five children
- Domestic violence, which may take the form of neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, or emotional maltreatment of children (children are also profoundly affected by witnessing violence in the home, which can draw them into a cycle of violence)
- Exposure to violence in society and the media, which researchers have found causes some children to become desensitized to violence and others to become more fearful of violence

- Easy access to guns and other weapons
- Ethnic or racial conflict, which creates tension that can quickly escalate into violence
- Gangs, which are both a cause and a consequence of violence and which adopt violence as a way of life
- Substance abuse, which shares many of the same risk factors as violence; reducing access to drugs may reduce violence

Public health experts concerned about youth safety recommend fighting violence the same way they combat disease: ***reducing the risk factors*** known to increase the likelihood of violence, while at the same time ***increasing the protective factors*** that work against violence.

Research also underscores the need for early intervention with children most at risk of adopting violent behaviors (Walker, 1995). Efforts to stem violence have shown early intervention to be safer, preferable, and more cost-effective than waiting until violent behaviors become a habit (Prothrow-Stith, 1994). Children who exhibit chronic patterns of aggressive behavior in the early elementary grades are at risk not only of continued aggression, but also for delinquency and substance abuse (Larson, 1994; Lochman, White, & Wayland, 1991).

Warning Signs

How can educators know when to intervene? According to the American Psychological Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics, the following warning signs merit attention from a mental health expert:

Warning signs in the toddler and preschool child:

- Has many temper tantrums in a single day or several lasting more than 15 minutes, and often cannot be calmed by parents, family members, or other caregivers
- Has many aggressive outbursts, often for no reason
- Is extremely active, impulsive, and fearless
- Consistently refuses to follow directions and listen to adults
- Does not seem attached to parents
- Frequently watches violence on television, engages in play that has violent themes, or is cruel toward other children

Warning signs in the school-aged child:

- Has trouble paying attention and concentrating
- Often disrupts classroom activities
- Does poorly in school
- Frequently gets into fights with other children in school
- Reacts to disappointments, criticism, or teasing with extreme and intense anger, blame, or revenge
- Watches many violent television shows and movies or plays a lot of violent video games
- Has few friends, and is often rejected by other children because of his or her behavior
- Makes friends with other children known to be unruly or aggressive
- Consistently does not listen to adults
- Is not sensitive to the feelings of others
- Is cruel or violent toward pets or other animals

Warning signs in the preteen or adolescent:

- Consistently does not listen to authority figures
- Pays no attention to the feelings or rights of others
- Mistreats people and seems to rely on physical violence or threats of violence to solve problems
- Often expresses the feeling that life has treated him or her unfairly
- Does poorly in school and often skips classes
- Misses school frequently for no identifiable reason
- Gets suspended from or drops out of school
- Joins a gang, gets involved in fighting, stealing, or destroying property
- Drinks alcohol and/or uses inhalants or drugs

This material was excerpted from a brochure produced through a collaborative project of the American Psychological Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Full text copies of the brochure are available by contacting the American Academy, Division of Publications, 141 Northwest Point Blvd, PO Box 927, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009-0927.

Walking the Talk: Implementing Violence Prevention Efforts

Because schools are in the learning business, they are ideally positioned to teach young people alternatives to violence (Walker, 1995). Of course, schools alone cannot hope to end the cycle of violence in our society. But school-based efforts can provide the cornerstone of comprehensive efforts to reduce violence in the community. Schools offer the most logical and accessible point to reach the students most at risk of violent behavior (Prothrow-Stith, 1994). Educational programs–whether they involve individual classrooms, entire schools, or community partnerships–provide a variety of opportunities for students to adopt norms and learn skills that can lead to nonviolent problem solving (Drug Strategies, 1998). Following is an examination of the different ways the education system can target and impact violence prevention work.

Schoolwide Efforts. Schoolwide violence prevention efforts can take many forms. They may work to protect students from danger or victimization, and can also seek to prevent students from developing or relying on aggressive behavior as a way to solve conflicts (Walker, 1995). One of the first steps for schools to take in developing strategies for preventing violence is to identify existing problems and assess the needs of their school and its surrounding neighborhood. The team of individuals who do this may involve the principal, teachers, parents, students, school board members, community volunteers, local law enforcement agencies, and others who care about making schools safe. Additional issues that should be addressed in schoolwide efforts include:

- ***Physical plant:*** The school building should feel safe to those who occupy it. Entrances should be visible, hallways well lighted, and playgrounds monitored. If hallways or the cafeteria have the tendency to become congested, class periods can be staggered to reduce crowding. The aesthetics of a school are also important to safety. Is the school an attractive, welcoming place where students want to spend their time? In addition, the school should work to make a connection to the surrounding neighborhood. Conducting a site assessment (with student involvement) can help determine other specific issues of concern (Center for Study and Prevention of Violence, 1998).
- ***Organization:*** Safe schools tend to have a strong sense of community. Small schools often have such an atmosphere because their size allows teachers and students to get to know one another well. In larger schools, organizing by inter-disciplinary teams can create smaller communities in which students have a chance to bond with adults and with the institution of school.

- ***Discipline:*** Safe schools deal with disruptive behavior early, fairly, and effectively. To feel respected, students need to perceive discipline as being fair, consistent, and clear. Disciplinary policies (such as zero tolerance for weapons, drugs, or alcohol) need to be age appropriate, clear, and repeatedly communicated to students and parents. Youth who are chronically violent or antisocial, and whose presence may put others in danger, need to be provided with alternatives that offer age-specific interventions and teach positive skills (Drug Strategies, 1998; Ingersoll, 1997).

- ***Norms:*** Schools are well positioned to challenge social norms that reinforce violence and replace them with norms that prevent violence. For example, students identified as natural leaders can be recruited for conflict resolution or peer mediation programs. These popular programs change norms by teaching that creative problem-solving–not fighting–is "cool." Diversity education teaches respect for others as a school norm. Having all staff model such skills as active listening, anger management, and creative problem solving reinforces these positive norms.

- ***Crisis response:*** Advance planning allows a school to respond quickly in the event of a crisis. The crisis response team in the school should run through possible scenarios and establish a plan that clearly indicates how the school will react to a situation and who will do what. This plan should then be disseminated to all building staff, including support, custodial, and food service staff.

- ***Teacher training:*** Inservice training helps teachers understand the theory behind a violence prevention curriculum. Training from mental health experts can help teachers identify at-risk students who may need expert attention or intervention.

- ***Instructional delivery:*** Schools must decide how they want the violence prevention message to be delivered to students. Prepackaged curricula, training videos, speakers, and trainers are among the many options available. (See Appendix I for guidelines in selecting a curriculum.)

Classroom Efforts. In conjunction with schoolwide efforts, or as the lesson plans of one teacher, classroom violence prevention learning can greatly enhance the safety of a school. Keep in mind that violence prevention is not a one-time lesson. Rather, it's an ongoing process in which positive behaviors are modeled and reinforced. Ideas for effectively communicating a violence prevention message in individual classrooms include:

- ***Teach and practice social skills:*** An effective violence prevention curriculum teaches skills that enable students to manage their anger, solve problems, negotiate with their peers, listen actively, communicate effectively, and resolve conflict (Drug Strategies, 1998). Interactive teaching methods (such as group work, cooperative learning, and class discussions) give students opportunities to practice positive social skills.
- ***Connect violence-prevention skills to academics:*** The pursuit of academic excellence may also help prevent violence (Larson, 1994). Academic subjects such as English, math, and social studies develop students' cognitive skills. The same skills–reasoning, weighing consequences, using language to solve problems, making considered choices–will also help them reason their way through the stressful and conflict-laden situations that life presents (Prothrow-Stith, 1994). Teachers can help students see the connection between the classroom and the rest of their life. A health class, for example, can teach that anger is a normal emotion we all experience and can constructively channel. A history class can reinforce this message by highlighting individuals who have channeled their anger or frustration into creative solutions. A civics class can reinforce it again by giving students an opportunity to put their problem-solving skills to work on an issue that affects the school or community (Kenney & Watson, 1996).
- ***Manage class efficiently:*** A well-managed classroom provides a stable environment conducive to learning and a place where students can practice positive skills. Ideas to help educators manage their classrooms effectively include: using body language to "cue" students about their behavior (reinforcing positive behavior, and discouraging negative behavior); moving around the classroom to increase physical proximity to all students; detecting problems before violence erupts; and applying fair, consistent discipline (Rossman & Morley, 1996). Students tend to show more respect for teachers whose classroom style is marked by firmness, compassion, and an interesting, engaging, and challenging style of teaching, and who do not let differences of race, class, or age create barriers between them and their students (Noguera, 1996).

- ***Develop media awareness:*** Students need to become more aware consumers of the mass media. Class discussions can deglamorize the violent heroes and themes celebrated in movies and on television by discussing the real consequences of violent behavior (Prothrow-Stith, 1994).

- ***Teach conflict resolution skills:*** Peer mediation and conflict resolution programs teach students skills to settle their differences creatively, without violence. These proactive programs teach that conflict is pervasive and inevitable. Handled constructively, conflict can lead to healthy development and growth. Handled destructively, it can lead to troubled or abusive relationships or failed goals (Horowitz & Boardman, 1994). As early as the elementary grades, volunteer peer mediators can be trained to help their fellow students settle differences by negotiating a series of confidential steps:

    1. Each party gets a chance to explain his or her view of the situation
    2. Each party puts his or her feelings into the open, which creates empathy
    3. Both parties are empowered to solve the problem nonviolently

    (Shepherd, 1994)

- Remind students that they can make a difference. Help students see that violence is not inevitable. Use poster contests, art shows, theater presentations, and other forums to involve students in spreading the word about violence prevention. (For a detailed list of steps students can take to prevent violence, see Appendix II.)

Community Involvement. Beyond teacher and administrator efforts to curb school violence, enlisting the community to combat violence can help reduce risks and promote protective bonds between young people, and their families, schools, and communities (Drug Strategies, 1998; Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, 1994). Such involvement enables the school to draw on the diversity of the local community (Center for Study of Prevention of Violence, 1998). Opportunities for community involvement can include:

- **Mentoring:** Mentoring can connect youth with positive adult role models and help to combat the risks and diminished opportunities created by poverty or family dysfunction.

- **Parent involvement:** Roles that parents can play in schools are endless. Parent volunteers can serve as safety monitors, provide safe houses, or patrol corridors between school and home to enhance student security.
- **Parenting skills education:** Schools can teach positive parenting skills that may prevent abuse and help break the cycle of family violence. Parent management training, which teaches parents skills for interacting positively with their children, is an important component in treating aggressive children (Larson, 1994). Classes for teen parents provide early intervention for young families.
- **Youth services:** Community leaders should be involved in planning for violence prevention to coordinate delivery of services from a variety of agencies and organizations. Make the school available for after-hour use by community groups. Youth clubs or after-school recreation programs, for instance, can become school allies to prevent violence. After-school recreation programs make the school a safe haven within the community.
- **Building liaisons:** Community policing and other liaisons with law enforcement (such as recruiting police officers to coach youth basketball leagues) bring students into contact with police in positive ways (Kenney & Watson, 1996).
- **Creating service opportunities:** Schools can provide students with opportunities to make positive contributions to the life of the community through service learning, thus creating in students a sense of pride and connection to the community.
- **Weapons education:** Community-based weapons education programs attempt to deglamorize weapons, make young people think about the consequences of their actions, and also connect at-risk youth with adults in positive, nonpunitive ways. They offer an opportunity to intervene early with youth who have been caught in possession of a weapon (Trone, 1997). Messages are often delivered by presenters who have "been there," who share the students' socioeconomic background, and who may have learned the hard way that weapons don't solve problems. Typical messages include:
    - Gun violence hurts the victims, their families, and entire communities
    - Being involved in gun violence will change your whole life
    - There are adults who care and can help you find nonviolent ways to solve problems

    (Trone, 1997)

Challenges to Violence Prevention

It is never easy to implement a new educational program. Even the best of intentions can result in frustration if planners are not aware of potential pitfalls. The following list details some possible challenges to effective implementation of violence prevention programs.

- **System coordination**: Work to coordinate the various agencies based on a shared goal, while at the same time navigating community politics. Different agencies may have overlapping agendas when it comes to school safety and violence prevention. Avoid turf battles by working toward cooperative solutions.
- **Parent participation:** Acknowledge that it may take effort to enlist the support of parents for volunteer programs that are perceived as time-intensive, due to the time constraints many families live under. Outreach may be needed to overcome parental resistance to attending parenting skills classes. Enlist the media to help spread the word in creative ways that engage target populations.
- **School climate:** Remain proactive, not reactive. "Get tough" security measures, such as placing metal detectors at the school doors and having armed guards patrol the hallways, may have some popular appeal. However, these measures have not proven generally effective in reducing school violence (Noguera, 1996). Reactive measures don't address the underlying causes of violence and don't promote positive norms. Nor do such efforts involve students as part of the solution. Instead, they project a negative message that students are not to be trusted (Drug Strategies, 1998). Schools that do resort to security measures need to communicate that these policies don't reflect mistrust of students; rather, they are being used to protect students from danger.
- **Implementation method:** Avoid using scare tactics with students. Graphic films about violence may backfire and actually glamorize guns or fighting.
- **Program scope:** Remember that effective efforts are long-term and comprehensive. Short-term or one-shot violence prevention efforts are seldom successful.
- **Expectations:** Accept that there is no easy cure for violence. Expecting a conflict resolution or peer mediation program to provide a total solution to

school violence, for example, is unrealistic and sets up the program for failure (Horowitz & Boardman, 1995). Similarly, programs that focus exclusively on one theme, such as self-esteem, tend to be ineffective as violence prevention (Drug Strategies, 1998). Gang members may have high self-esteem but lack the skills needed to avoid resolving conflicts violently.

Conclusion

On their own, schools can't hope to solve the complex problems associated with violence in the school environment. However, there are many compelling reasons for educators to take the lead in violence prevention. Research shows that early prevention offers the best hope for breaking the cycle of violence. Schools provide a logical, accessible place where young people can learn the skills to solve problems without resorting to violence. The life skills that prevent violence also go hand in hand with academic achievement. Teaching and modeling these skills can make schools safer and more effective, benefiting students, teachers, families, and the larger community.

Appendix I

Purchasing a Violence Prevention Program

Many schools choose to purchase programs that can come with everything from lesson plans to videos to on-site training. When sorting through all the options available, it is important to note that effective school-based violence prevention programs share key elements. Questions to consider in selecting a program that is right for your school include the following criteria, adopted from Drug Strategies and the Comprehensive Health Education Foundation:

1. Is the program based on theory and research?
2. Does the program include a comprehensive K-12 curriculum? Are interventions developmentally tailored to be age and stage specific?
3. Does the program include practical, skill-building lessons and activities in addition to information?
4. Is the program comprehensive, involving family, peers, media, and the entire community?
5. Does the program use culturally sensitive material appropriate for working with students from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds?
6. Do teachers find the program satisfying and valuable? Does it include teacher training?
7. Is the program cost-efficient?
8. Can the program be incorporated into a school's total curriculum?
9. Do students enjoy the program?

Appendix II

Ten Things Kids Can Do to Stop Violence

1. Settle arguments with words, not fists or weapons. Don't stand around and form an audience when others are arguing. A group makes a good target for violence.
2. Learn safe routes for walking in the neighborhood, and know good places to seek help.
3. Report any crimes or suspicious actions to the police, school authorities, and parents.
4. Don't open the door to anyone you don't know and trust.
5. Never go anywhere with someone you don't know and trust.
6. If someone tries to abuse you, say no, get away, and tell a trusted adult. Trust feelings, and if you sense danger, get away fast. Remember: Violence is not the victim's fault.
7. Don't use alcohol or other drugs, and stay away from places and people associated with them.
8. Stick with friends who are also against violence and drugs, and stay away from known trouble spots.
9. Get involved to make school safer and better. Hold rallies, counsel peers, settle disputes peacefully. If there's no program, help start one.
10. Help younger children learn to avoid being crime victims. Set a good example, and volunteer to help with community efforts to stop crime and prevent violence.

This reproducible fact sheet was provided by the Connecticut Clearinghouse, a program of Wheeler Clinic, Inc., which is funded by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

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